

CONTEXT

- Already vulnerable to climate shocks and other risks related to structural poverty and chronic violence, El Salvador experienced several emergencies—including natural disasters and the onset of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic—in 2020 that exacerbated humanitarian needs across the country. As of August 2021, the UN estimated that approximately 1.7 million people required humanitarian assistance, representing a more than 160 percent increase compared with the estimated 643,000 people in need in early 2020.
- The 2020 Atlantic hurricane season was the most active season ever recorded, with 30 named storms and 13 hurricanes, including six major hurricanes. In particular, tropical storms Amanda and Cristobal in May and June 2020 and hurricanes Eta and Iota in November 2020 negatively affected the livelihoods of nearly 60 percent of households in El Salvador. These crises contributed to increased humanitarian needs in El Salvador, particularly among vulnerable populations such as women; children; indigenous people; LGBTQI+ populations; and people with disabilities.
- Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, limited health services and insufficient availability of water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) infrastructure have challenged efforts to control transmission, while the socioeconomic impacts of the pandemic have exacerbated existing health, food, nutrition, protection, and WASH needs, increasing the number of people requiring humanitarian assistance across the country. As of July 2022, the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) projected that up to 1 million people in El Salvador would likely face Stressed—IPC 2—or worse levels of acute food security through January 2023.¹
- On January 26, 2022, U.S. Chargé d’Affaires Brendan O’Brien reissued a disaster declaration for El Salvador in response to food insecurity in the country, exacerbated by the impacts of natural disasters, the COVID-19 pandemic, and recurrent drought.



ASSISTANCE

- In response to persistent food insecurity, USAID’s Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (USAID/BHA) supports the delivery of cash transfers for food to meet emergency food needs and prevent and address acute malnutrition among the most food-insecure households. USAID/BHA food assistance aims to address increased needs in a manner that improves food consumption patterns and increases dietary diversity. Additionally, USAID/BHA partners are supporting subsistence farmers and other agriculture-dependent households through the provision of appropriate and timely inputs for planting and growing seasons—such as farming tools, fertilizer, and seeds—to improve food security. USAID/BHA partners also provide training on climate-smart farming practices such as drip

¹The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) is a multi-partner initiative that developed a standardized scale to classify the severity and magnitude of food insecurity. The IPC scale, which is comparable across countries and time, ranges from Minimal—IPC 1—to Famine—IPC 5—for acute food insecurity.

irrigation, diversification of crops, and soil management to increase crop production and build resilience to future climate shocks. Moreover, USAID/BHA partners also provide multipurpose cash assistance (MPCA) to help households meet critical food, hygiene, shelter, and other basic needs.

- USAID/BHA protection partners in El Salvador provide psychosocial support, learning and recreational opportunities for children, and case management and referral services for women and girls at high risk or victims of exploitation, gender-based violence, and other forms of abuse. USAID/BHA also funds child protection activities, including coordination, advocacy, and response efforts.
- USAID/BHA partners are supporting vulnerable households to restore livelihoods, increase financial resilience, and mitigate the effects of future shocks. Program activities include financial literacy courses, establishing community savings and loans groups, and restarting income-generating activities.
- To bolster COVID-19 preparedness and response in El Salvador, USAID/BHA provides funding for health, protection, and WASH activities, including technical support for COVID-19 case management and infection prevention and control in health facilities. Additionally, USAID/BHA has supported health care facilities by repairing physical infrastructure, distributing essential supplies and equipment, and training health care personnel on critical management of emergency patients.
- USAID/BHA funds early recovery, risk reduction, and resilience (ER4) activities that focus on building long-term resilience and response capacity in El Salvador’s La Union, San Miguel, San Salvador, San Vicente, and Usulután departments. USAID/BHA partners are increasing disaster resilience by bolstering the technical capacity of local governments and communities to prepare for, mitigate, and respond to natural hazards, including earthquakes. USAID/BHA is also supporting efforts to increase food security among drought-affected households by training smallholder farmers to apply sustainable agriculture practices, diversify agricultural income, and strengthen local management of water sources.



USAID/BHA staff speak to beneficiaries during registration for MPCA programming in Usulután Department, El Salvador. *Photo Credit: World Vision El Salvador*

USAID/BHA Funding in El Salvador ²			
	Emergency	ER4	TOTAL
FY 2021	\$16,109,138	\$530,000	\$16,639,138
FY 2022	\$18,025,015	\$880,000	\$18,905,015

² Year of funding indicates the date of obligation, not appropriation, of funds. Funding figures reflect publicly announced funding as of June 10, 2022. Totals include estimated value of food assistance and transportation costs at time of procurement; subject to change.